

English



# Women Artists committed to the Republic

1931—1939

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April 14<sup>th</sup> – September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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# Women Artists committed to the Republic

1931—1939

The proclamation of the Republic was welcomed by the majority of women with immense enthusiasm, as it fostered great expectations and a zest for freedom. The Catalan Government (the Generalitat) and the Government of the Spanish Republic introduced important legislative changes that sought to eliminate discrimination against women.

The Generalitat's cultural policy aimed to make culture Catalan, democratic, scientific and secular, while making every effort to raise the cultural level of the population. As for the art world, new museums and new private exhibition rooms were opened, school workshops and new groups of artists were set up in the search for a new art form. Many artists made the most of the opportunity and took part.

Unfortunately, due to the fascist uprising, all attempts to create this new art form, an artistic avant-garde, were stopped in their tracks. Private galleries were to all intents and purposes shut down, as they were unable to sell those works exhibited. Two types of artistic activity took place during the war years: those held in official halls, and the exhibitions promoted by parties and unions. This however was a period of immense creativity in the Republican zone. Artistic production was politicized, and an emphasis was placed on propaganda.

Many artists sided with the legally and legitimately-established Republic and supported the revolution from the outset. They placed themselves at the service of the Generalitat in order to contribute in education, exhibitions, culture and the protection of artistic heritage, among other activities. Women, like their peers, played a major role in the communication of information, and in the transmission of ideology. They joined artists' unions, participated in exhibitions, and weighed in, with their drawings and photomontages in numerous magazines of the time. There may well have been more active artists than those listed here, as many of the illustrations and posters were produced anonymously.

Our aim is to make the creations of these artists known; artists whose iconography reveals different aspects of daily life during the years of the Republic (1931-1939). These works portray those times, and the problems the population had to face, the worst of which was a fierce and bloody war that was to last for almost three years. Only in this way will collective memory be able to assimilate the legacy of these women and their artistic work, they will no longer be forgotten, and their well-earned value will at long-last be recognised.

We have chosen not to exhibit works with content that does not cover those social or political aspects that relate to the Republic, even when their creators had firm social or political commitments. What we have exhibited are works that we have been able to find by artists who were born in Catalonia and who lived much of their lives here (Lola Anglada Sarriera, Carme Millà Tersol, Maria Ferrés Puig, Remedios Varo Uranga), or who, despite not having been born in the region, spent long periods of time here (Elisa Piqueras Lozano, Manuela Ballester Vilaseca and Juana Francisca Rubio García), as well as those women who took part in some of the many artistic activities that were held in Catalonia between 1931 and 1939 (Francisca Bartolozzi Sánchez, Maruja Mallo, Àngela Nebot Molada and Anna Aguilera Gassol). All the works on display have, as has been noted, content aligned with the social and moral values associated with Republican ideals and their defence.



# Carme Millà Tersol

**Barcelona**  
**1907—1999**

A woman committed to the Republic and to anarchism, she held various positions in the CNT-AIT Education and Independent Professions Union in Barcelona, where she played an important role. Due to her concerns regarding education, she took part in the drafting of the statutes for the Council of the New Unified School (CENU), and was a teacher at this school as well as the creator of the poster *New School, Free People*.

The poster uses rounded forms and a marked tenderness, in its defence of secular education and co-education: boys and girls not only shared the classrooms, but also the same educational materials, as shown by the two youngsters who are reading a large book on their laps. The poster *Help the Basque Country! CNT-AIT* is printed in only two inks, however it is highly expressive. It shows two Basque mothers dressed in a traditional manner, fleeing from bombardments with three children. The poster announced one of many festive events with great symbolic and emotional significance, that were held in Barcelona and other cities in Catalonia during the Pro-Euskadi Week, in June 1937, shortly after the bombing of Guernica (26 April).

In 1939, after Franco's victory, Carme Millà was forced into exile. She returned to Barcelona in 1959, where she exhibited her works in the *Selecciones Jaimés* exhibition centre, however she did not move back to the city until 1961. She continued her artistic activities after retiring.

1 |

**C.E.N.U. New School, Free People**

Barcelona: I. C. Seix i Barral (EC), 1936  
Chromolithography on paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona



1 |

2 |

**Help the Basque Country!... The CNT-AIT Education and Independent Professions Union**

Barcelona: La Neotípià, June 1937  
Lithography on paper

Museu de Reus. Institut Municipal Reus Cultura

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Two Basque women, mother and daughter, both dressed in traditional rural clothing, flee from the bombings with three children. Barcelona was the destination of many refugees from the exodus, especially women and children, escaping from the barbarity of the conflict. The Basques were the most numerous. This festival was one of many events, with a marked symbolic and emotional significance, it was held in Barcelona and other cities of Catalonia as part of the Pro-Euskadi Week, and it took place shortly after the bombing of Guernica (26 April, 1937).

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**«Like so many Spaniards, I believed in rejuvenation and I leapt into the street to enthusiastically witness, the people bursting out.»**

María Lejárraga

3 |

**The logo of the Teachers Section of the CNT-AIT Education and Independent Professions Union**

Barcelona, n.d.  
Pen drawing with ink on paper

Private collection

4 |

**Assignment: the appointment of Carme Millà as a provisional teacher for the Board of the New Unified School of the Generalitat of Catalonia**

Barcelona, 31 May 1937  
Printed paper and manuscript

Private collection

5 |

**Calendar**

Barcelona: La Neotípià, 1936  
Printed paper

Núria Rius Vernet collection

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At the end of 1935, the La Neotípià printing press, which was created in 1905 by her father as a collective workers' company, presented the 1936 calendar in booklet format, with sayings for each day of the year. Carme Millà illustrated it with child-like drawings, one for each month, of geometric shapes that provoked sensations of movement.

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2 |





# Lola Anglada Sarriera

Barcelona – Tiana  
1892–1984

At the time her commitment to Catalan nationalism was already evident, especially with the illustrations she made for the magazine *Nosaltres Sols!* from the first issue of 28 March 1931, through to 1933. Her illustrations were characterized by the representation of her homeland, Catalonia, through the figure of a young woman in traditional Catalan dress.

She was affectionately known as «the mother of the prisoners» due to the help she gave them with their drawings, and for her involvement in acts and mobilizations aimed at their release, as in the case of the Garraf Plot.

She was the Secretary of Cultural and Social Action for the Catalan Union and, during the war years, joined the UGT trade union. The Propaganda Commissioner of the Generalitat, Jaume Miravittles, commissioned her to bring to life the character named *The Smallest of them All*, modelled on a sculpture by Miquel Paredes. She changed this initial character for an androgynous being, a representative of all the values that the war was destroying and, as such, a symbol of an oppressed Catalonia, of the Republic and of a people fighting against fascism.

She also produced an entire series of watercolour drawings of characters from the war: militiamen, brigadiers, women belonging to the Battalion of Death or the *Malatesta Centuria* and the Thaëlmann Column; nor did she ignore the Commissariat of Propaganda of the Generalitat, or those she called «the others» (the victors of the war: Falangists, *Requetés* and Italian soldiers).

She was unwilling to go into exile after the war, and was forced to hide in flats Barcelona until she later settled permanently in the nearby town of Tiana. She was hampered from selling her works and exhibiting them without problems.

6 |

### The Smallest of them All

Barcelona: Commissariat of Propaganda of the Generalitat of Catalonia, 1937  
Typographic printing on paper

Biblioteca del MNAC-Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona



6 |

7 |

### Park of La Ciutadella. To the front

Barcelona, July-August 1936  
Conte pencil drawing, coloured with watercolour on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona



7 |

8 |

### Russian Militiamen from the International Brigades

Barcelona, January 1937  
Conte pencil drawing, coloured with watercolour on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona

«I have never felt as alive in my homeland as I did in the times of the Republic.»

Lola Anglada Sarriera

9 |

### The Others

Tiana, 1939  
Conte pencil drawing, coloured with watercolour on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona

10 |

### Comissariat of Propaganda

Barcelona, January 1937  
Conte pencil drawing, coloured with watercolour on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona

11 |

### The Karl Marx Barracks. On the Rambles

Barcelona, July 1936  
Conte pencil drawing, coloured with watercolour on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona

12 |

### To the front. At the Karl Marx Barracks

Barcelona, August 1936  
Conte pencil drawing, coloured with watercolour on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona

13 |

### The Thaëlmann Column. Park of La Ciutadella. To the front

Barcelona, August 1936  
Conte pencil drawing, coloured with watercolour on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona

## 14 |

### An Afternoon at the Port

1936

Pen drawing with ink and graphite pencil on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona

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Jaume Miravittles commissioned Lola Anglada to bring the character *The Smallest of them All* to life. She created an androgynous figure that had little to do with the statuette, made by Miquel Parede, which was given to her as a model to work from with total artistic freedom. In this drawing the observer can instantly note the differences between children and the character she drew. Several readings may be taken from it: as a child, it can be seen as a symbol of a better future, it may be the icon of a people fighting fascism, it could also be the personification of all those values damaged by the war: friendship, solidarity, joy, generosity, discretion and respect.

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## 15 |

### The Smallest of them All

1939

Conte pencil drawing, coloured with watercolour on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona

## 16 |

### Cover of the leaflet with the song *The Smallest of them All*

February 1937

Lithography on bènd paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona

## 17 |

### *Mirbal* magazine, n° 1 [unnumbered page]

Barcelona: I. G. Viladot, 1937

Printed paper

Biblioteca de Catalunya, Barcelona

## 18 |

### *Estel: Publicació Quinzenal per a Nois i Noies* magazine, Year I, n° 1 [unnumbered page]

Barcelona: Grafos Ada, September 1937

Printed paper

Biblioteca de Catalunya, Barcelona

## 19 |

### Just Us. The Womens' Section

1931

Pen drawing with ink on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona

## 20 |

### Death before teaching our children in a foreign language

August 1932

Pen drawing with graphite and Conte pencil on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona

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This image was published in the 70<sup>th</sup> issue of 6 August 1932, in the magazine *Nosaltres Sols!* with the footnote: «Death before teaching our children in a foreign language».

A mother protects her children before they are shot by a platoon whose shadow can only be seen, with iconography that clearly evokes Francisco de Goya's *The Shootings of May Third*. It also recalls works by the German painter and sculptor Käthe Kolwitz. The artist, as she did in other drawings for the same magazine, re-uses a female image as a symbol of Catalonia. The footnote with which the drawing was published alludes to the importance of the mother tongue in any nationalist claims.

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## 21 |

### They won't tell me to my face that this people has not defended the Catalan Republic!

August 1932

Conte pencil drawing on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona

## 22 |

### Catalonia-Basque Country

1938

Pen drawing with ink and graphite pencil on paper

Historical-artistic collection of the Diputació de Barcelona



# Maria Ferrés Puig

*Maria Freser*

Vilassar de Mar—Valls  
1874—1964

Maria Ferrés — or Freser, as she signed her works — painted life in the rearguard. Her small-format drawings are produced in a nimble way and coloured with soft tones, while lending sensations of immediacy and movement. They comprise a chronicle of the characters witnessed on the streets of Barcelona during the lengthy conflict. None were left aside: Republican soldiers in uniform, militiamen, members of the FAI and the International Brigades, political commissars, rebel soldiers, members of the Moorish guard dressed in red fezzes and white djellabas, Falangists, Carlists in different uniforms, girls in the Women's Section, women in ration queues, or holding empty baskets, looking for food, even black market leaders, people forced into exile, with bundles of clothes on their heads, and many others.

At first glance, it might seem that Maria Ferrés did not take sides in the representation of these war-torn figures, like Lola Anglada, adding those she called *The Others* to her series of drawings. However, with a more careful inspection one can discover how subtly her preference is shown, as one only has to look at the faces of those who were forced to flee into exile, or compare how people on the different sides are represented (militiamen, confronted by members of the Moorish guard), to cite just two examples.





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23 |

### International Brigade. Sketch of the Civil War

1936  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

24 |

### Sketch of the Civil War

1936  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

25 |

### Sketch of the Civil War

February 1937  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

26 |

### The Battalion of Death. Sketch of the Civil War

1936  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

27 |

### Sketch of the Civil War

January 1937  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

## «I have not come to the revolution to wait in the antechambers.»

Mary Low, English International Brigade Volunteer

28 |

### Valencia Street. Sketch of the Civil War

1936  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

29 |

### Sketch of the Civil War

December 1937  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

30 |

### Sketch of the Civil War

1936  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

31 |

### In the Back of a Lorry. Sketch of the Civil War

1939  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

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In her eagerness to represent all those who roamed the streets of Barcelona during the war, Maria Ferrés, like Lola Anglada, did not forget the victors, or the members of the Moorish Guard, with their red fezzes and white djellabas. Here they can be seen smiling, sitting in the back of a truck, enjoying their triumph, after the city was conquered and occupied in January 1939.

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32 |

### Sketch of the Civil War

1939  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

33 |

**Passeig de Gràcia. Sketch of the Civil War**

1939  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

34 |

**Sketch of the Civil War**

1939  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

35 |

**Sketch of the Civil War**

1939  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

36 |

**Sketch of the Civil War**

1939  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

37 |

**Sketch of the Civil War**

1939  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

38 |

**Sketch of the Civil War**

1939  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

39 |

**Sketch of the Civil War**

1939  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

40 |

**Sketch of the Civil War**

1939  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

41 |

**Sketch of the Civil War**

1939  
Watercolour on paper

Museu Enric Monjo - Museu Municipal de Vilassar de Mar

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Among her sketches of people in the rearguard, the artist dedicated a few to those fleeing into exile in 1939: silent men and women (the silence of civilians enduring beyond the limits of resignation), with baskets, bags, loads that they carried on their backs, heads or in their hands, trying to take the dearest elements of their lives and of their past to an uncertain destination. The feeling of haste and anguish that she managed to capture in these sketches contrasts with the calm and satisfaction seen in her sketches on the *Requetés* or the Moorish Guard.

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# Francisca Bartolozzi Sánchez

## *Pitti o Francis Bartolozzi*

Madrid – Pamplona  
1908 – 2004

During the Republic he participated in the Educational Missions (a government initiative to promote literacy and improve the education of disadvantaged sections of the population) and he worked on the illustration of comics - either his own, or those of others, in the magazine *Crónica*. From December 1934 he published the adventures of a child-hero, Canito, and his cat, Peladilla. In the last issue, Canito confronts a tyrant and defeats him, and he is shown on a donkey, with a sign that reads, «It's over for tyrants in this country! Long live freedom!» in a clear allusion to Franco's coup d'état. His illustrations for the series *Don Nubarrón*, which were set in the context of the war, and those of the weekly publication, *Sidrin*, about the adventures of a Republican boy are noteworthy.

In April 1938 she exhibited the six etchings of the series *Malsons Infants* in the Casal de la Cultura in Barcelona's Plaça de Catalunya, which were exhibited in the Pavilion of the Republic of the International Exhibition of Paris of 1937. The horrors of conflict are shown from the perspective of children. In all the compositions, a small child is threatened by a large monster.

She also produced watercolour drawings of everyday life during the war, featuring militiamen, children, women queuing to buy things, fleeing the bombing or escaping into exile, soldiers returning from the battlefield, and other subjects.

After the war, she settled in Pamplona, where she lived an inner exile, while combining her artistic creativity with family tasks, teaching, and work that she shared with her husband, her work was not always recognized as much as they could have been.



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## «There can be no art without freedom.»

**Francis Bartolozzi**

42 |

### **Mothers**

1938

Pen drawing in black ink on paper

**Museo de Navarra, Pamplona**

43 |

### **Escaping**

1938

Pen drawing in black ink on paper

**Museo de Navarra, Pamplona**

44 |

### **After the Bombardment**

1938

Pen drawing in Indian ink on paper

**Museo de Navarra, Pamplona**

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A drawing exhibited at the 1938 Barcelona Autumn Competition. Like most of her drawings about the disasters of war, women with children are also the main characters here. In this case, the artist, instead of using colour, used only black ink to emphasize the cruelty of the bombs. A row of women arranged in an incomplete semicircle take care of the children. Desolation is shown on faces and attitudes. The strength of these women is evident only in the size of their hands, arms, and shoulders. In the foreground, the woman's foot expresses her contact with reality, her desire to cling to life.

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### **In the Queue**

1938

Drawing in grease pencil and coloured on paper

**Museo de Navarra, Pamplona**

46 |

### **Loneliness**

1938

Drawing in grease pencil and coloured with ink wash on paper

**Museo de Navarra, Pamplona**

47 |

### **Alone**

1938

Drawing in grease pencil and coloured with ink wash on paper

**Museo de Navarra, Pamplona**

48 |

### **Peasant Militiaman**

1938

Drawing in grease pencil and coloured with ink wash on paper

**Museo de Navarra, Pamplona**

49 |

### **The Woman at War**

1938

Graphite pencil and pen drawing in ink and black ink wash on paper

**Museo de Navarra, Pamplona**

50 |

### **The Embrace**

1938

Drawing in grease pencil and coloured with ink wash on paper

**Museo de Navarra, Pamplona**

51 |

### **With a Gun on his Back**

1936

Drawing in grease pencil and coloured on paper

**Museo de Navarra, Pamplona**



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**The Return**

1938

Pen drawing in black ink on paper

Museo de Navarra, Pamplona

53 |

**At the Station**

1939

Pen drawing in black ink on paper

Museo de Navarra, Pamplona

54 |

***Sidrín brings out a weekly that is going to be extraordinary.* Poster for the presentation of *Sidrín*, a children's Sunday publication by Antoniorrobes, with illustrations by Pitti Bartolozzi**

Barcelona: Estrella / I. G. Seix i Barral (EC), 1937  
Chromolithography on paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

55 |

***Don Nubarrón and his Cauldron*, by Antoniorrobes. Story illustrated by Pitti Bartolozzi**

Barcelona: Estrella / Imp. Sociedad General de Publicaciones (EC), 1938  
Printed paper

Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica, Salamanca

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***Don Nubarrón and the Bag of Gold*, by Antoniorrobes. Story illustrated by Pitti Bartolozzi**

Barcelona: Estrella / Imp. Sociedad General de Publicaciones (EC), 1938  
Printed paper

Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica, Salamanca

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***Don Nubarrón in the Refuges*, by Antoniorrobes. Story illustrated by Pitti Bartolozzi**

Barcelona: Estrella / Imp. Sociedad General de Publicaciones (EC), 1938  
Printed paper

Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica, Salamanca

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***Don Nubarrón in the Queues*, by Antoniorrobes. Story illustrated by Pitti Bartolozzi**

Barcelona: Estrella / Imp. Sociedad General de Publicaciones (EC), 1938  
Printed paper

Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica, Salamanca

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**«Canito and his Cat, Peladilla». From the magazine *Crónica*, nº 305**

15 September 1935  
Printed paper

Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona (Casa de l'Ardiaca)

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Between 1934 and 1937, the weekly magazine *Crónica* published his comic «Canito, and his Cat, Peladilla», which narrates the adventures of a child-hero and his cat, who are always fighting injustice. In the last chapters, Canito confronts the tyrant 'Chumberas' (a reference to *Tirano Banderas*, by Valle-Inclán), who has been imposing his power and force on the population. In the end he defeats him, and he is shown on a donkey, with a sign that reads, «It's over for tyrants in this country! Long live freedom!» in a clear allusion to the Franco coup and the desire for a Republican victory.

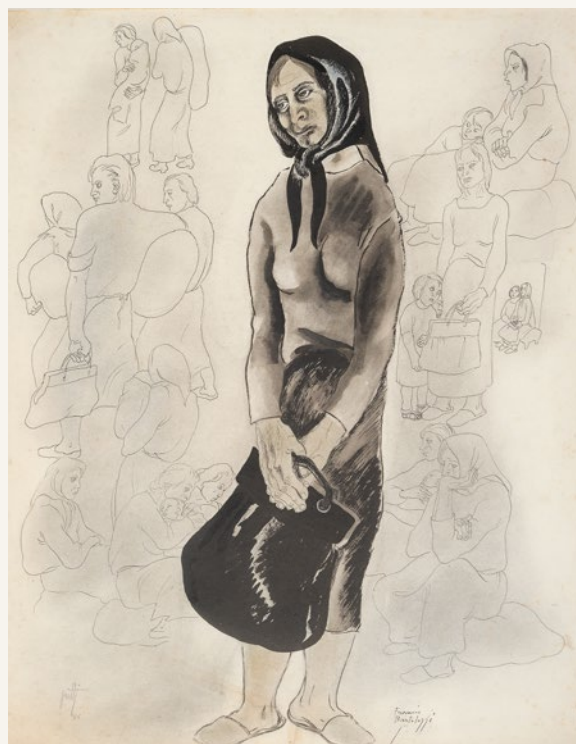
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60 |

**«Canito and his Cat, Peladilla». From the magazine *Crónica*, nº 236**

20 May 1934  
Printed paper

Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona (Casa de l'Ardiaca)



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# Manuela Ballester Vilaseca

Valencia – Berlin  
1908 – 1994

An artist of the 1930s Valencian avant-garde, she dedicated herself to the defence of women's rights. She made her first political poster, *Vote for the Popular Front!* for the 1936 legislative elections. The image depicts a mother trying to vote with an infant in her arms; in the background, and in front of the woman, she drew a crowd of faceless people in red, who represented people from the different left-wing parties. In contrast to them were representatives of the Church and capitalist society; traditional right-wing figures, who were drawn in black, who were crushing corpses while trying to prevent the woman from voting, tugging her back by her skirt. Her posters show her proletarian commitment. Her artistic principles rejected abstraction and proposed a new social realism that was committed to the times in which she lived.

She founded and directed the magazine *Pasionaria: Revista de las Mujeres Antifascistas de Valencia*, and she worked with many others.

When the Government of the Republic moved from Valencia to Barcelona in 1937, she and her husband, the poster designer Josep Renau, moved there with their children. In Barcelona she became a cartoonist in the Press and Propaganda Section of the General Commissariat of the Army.

She lived in exile in Mexico, where she remained until 1959, when she left for the German Democratic Republic. After Franco's death, this disciplined artist, with her strong character, unswerving ideals and profound feelings, made several trips to Valencia, her homeland all alone, separated from Renau, although she was never able to stay.



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### Fashion figure

1939

Ink wash on paper

Museu Nacional de Ceràmica i de les Arts  
Sumptuàries González Martí, Valencia

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She designed fashion figurines for the magazines *La Llar*, *Hogar y Moda* and *Crónica* magazines from a very young age. In this one, a young woman appears wearing a beautiful evening dress with a Republican flag worn as a kind of sash, in a strategy to support the Republic in 1939.

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### Portrait of Josep Renau

1934

Oil on canvas

Museu de la Ciutat, Valencia

63 |

Text from the article «A Mother in Defense of Her Children». From the magazine *Orto: Revista de Documentación Social*, nº 8 [unnumbered page, between 48 and 49]

Valencia: Tipografia P. Quiles, October 1932  
Printed paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

«Art has never been anything other than the embodiment of social reality.»

Manuela Ballester Vilaseca

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Cover of the magazine *Estudios: Generación Consciente. Revista Ecléctica*, Year X, nº 112

Valencia: Tipografia P. Quiles, December 1932  
Printed paper

Biblioteca de Catalunya, Barcelona

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The artist has depicted the uppermost part of the strong, muscular bodies of two naked workers, of different races, side by side and overlapping each other, in front of smoky factory chimneys. The men are shaking hands firmly, a clear sign of the unity of the workers, regardless of the difference in the colours of their skin. The magazine, which was created in 1929, dealt with the social issues of the time, and with rigour, making it both very appealing to enlightened intellectuals on one hand and hated by the reactionary forces on the other.

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Illustration from the article by Pascual Pla y Beltrán, «Elegy for Aida Lafuente». From the magazine *Nueva Cultura*, nº 11 (supplement), p. 19

Valencia, March–April 1936  
Printed paper

Biblioteca de Catalunya, Barcelona

66 |

Text and illustration from the article «The Work of Women in Agriculture». From the magazine *Nueva Cultura*, in the supplement *Nueva Cultura para el Campo*, nº 1 [p. 4]

Valencia: Tipografia Moderna, 1936  
Printed paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

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**Text and illustration from the article «Why to create Women's Antifascist Committees in Towns and what for». From the magazine *Nueva Cultura*, in the supplement *Nueva Cultura para el Campo*, nº 2 [p. 10]**

Valencia: Tipografía Moderna, 31 December 1936  
Printed paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

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**Text and illustration from the article «The Right to Land». From the magazine *Nueva Cultura*, in the supplement *Nueva Cultura para el Campo*, nº 3 [p. 6]**

Valencia: Tipografía Moderna, 31 January 1937  
Printed paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

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***Ejército del Ebro: Boletín de Campaña* magazine**

7 November 1938  
Printed paper

Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona (Casa de l'Ardiaca)



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**To bring the 30,000 prisoners back to their families, to bring bread to the homes of the unemployed and repressed. Vote for the Popular Front! Communist Party**

Valencia: Gráficas Valencia S.L., February 1936  
Chromolithography on paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

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The image shows a mother with an infant in her arms trying to vote; in the distance, in front of the woman, Ballester drew a crowd of faceless people in red, to represent those belonging to the different left-wing parties and to the right of the woman, representatives of the Church and capital, traditional right-wing figures, who are depicted in black, while crushing corpses, and are trying to prevent her from voting by tugging on her skirt. Many of her works are testament to her social and political commitment.

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71 |

**Illustration from the poster «Vote for the Popular Front!». From the magazine *Nueva Cultura*, nº 11 (supplement)**

Valencia, March–April 1936  
Printed paper

Biblioteca del MNAC-Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona





# Juana Francisca Rubio García

*Paquita Rubio o Paquita Bardasano*

Madrid

1911–2008

She was the only woman during the war to work as a poster designer in *La Gallofa*, the propaganda workshop of the Fine Arts Section of the Juventuts Socialistes Unificades (JSU), to which she belonged. In most of her posters she alluded to women and their participation in the war, and opted for Realism as her aesthetic style, due to the influence of Soviet Russia. Of the twenty posters she signed, only a few remain. Almost all of them were made for women's organizations: the *Muchachas*, from Madrid, or the *Unión de Muchachas*, from Valencia, which were women's youth organizations committed to the Republican cause. Her female figures often feature muscular, athletic, masculinized feminine figures, with broad shoulders and sturdy legs; a new model for young women that promulgated the ideal of a body honed by sport, with the latter being considered as a complementary practice to culture. She has also worked as an illustrator in numerous magazines.

Paquita Rubio, who had already taken part in the 1937 Paris International Exhibition, also participated in the *Youth Exhibition. Art at the Service of the People*, which was organized by the PSUC Communist party's Culture and Propaganda Commission. It was inaugurated on 2 May 1938 at the Hotel Colon in Barcelona.

When the Government of the Republic had to move to Valencia, she, her husband, the poster designer José Bardasano, and their daughter, also left. From Valencia they went to Barcelona, from where, just before the war's end, they left for France, and from there, on to Mexico. The couple returned to Spain in 1961.



81 |

72 |

**Homage to Madrid, 7 November 1936 - 7 November 1937**

C. 1936  
Printed paper

Fundación Pablo Iglesias. Archivo y Biblioteca,  
Alcalá de Henares (Madrid)

73 |

**Two Women**

Barcelona: Imprenta Seix Barral, August 1937  
Engraving on paper (card)

Fundación Pablo Iglesias. Archivo y Biblioteca,  
Alcalá de Henares (Madrid)

74 |

**Alianza: Órgano de la A.J.A. de España [Alianza Juvenil Antifascista de España] magazine, Section «Our Artists», Year I, nº 2, p. 2**

9 June 1938  
Printed paper

Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona (Casa de l'Ardiaca)

75 |

**Drawing illustrating the text by Llibertat Picornell «For a Healthy, Strong and Happy Youth ». From the magazine *Companya*, Year I, nº 9, p. 7**

Barcelona, 15 August 1937  
Printed paper

Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica, Salamanca

76 |

**«Women! Stand up!». Illustration from the cover of the daily newspaper *ABC: Diario Republicano de Izquierdas*. Año Trigésimosegundo**

Madrid, 13 November 1936  
Printed paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

In the centre of this front page of *ABC*, a Madrid newspaper that had been confiscated by the Republican government since 19 July, 1939, a young woman dressed in a militia jumpsuit, is surrounded by women working in tasks normally considered as being for men. It is a call to other women to take up the work that men did before leaving for the front: in the countryside, in factories, on the streets, in hospitals, etc. It may seem like a call to remove women from the trenches, applying the decrees of Largo Caballero, made in autumn 1936, however authors such as Gonzalo Berger and Tània Batlló claim that the decrees did not explicitly allude to the expulsion of women from the front. Furthermore, over 3,200 women fighters were registered in the militias and the People's Army, despite the fact that parties and institutions encouraged their withdrawal.

77 |

**Illustration from the magazine cover of *Moments: La Revista del Nostre Temps*, nº 11**

Barcelona: La Casa dels Secretaris / Elzeviriana, 1938  
Printed paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

78 |

**Drawing illustrating the article by Loren «Why does Fascism want our Homeland?». From the magazine *Muchachas: Unión de Muchachas de España*, 2nd period, nº 2, p. 5**

Barcelona: Comité Nacional de Unión de Muchachas de España, 1 June 1938  
Printed paper

Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica, Salamanca

79 |

***Companions! Take up the jobs of those who are going to be holding rifles*. Propaganda poster for the *Juventuts Socialistes Unificades (JSU)***

Madrid: Helios Artes Gráficas, UGT, 1937  
Chromolithography on paper

Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica, Salamanca

80 |

### Conference of the Muchachas de Madrid

Madrid: Unión Poligráfica, Consejo Obrero,  
May 1937  
Chromolithography on paper

Centro Documental de la Memoria  
Histórica, Salamanca

81 |

### Unión de Muchachas. Camp

Madrid: Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y  
Sanidad / Valencia: Gráficas Valencia (a publishing  
house under UGT-CNT control), n.d.  
Chromolithography on paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

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A young woman about to throw the javelin represents a new model of the feminine, in which a body formed through sport is promulgated, and where sport is considered a complementary cultural practice. The female figures in her posters are usually young, muscular, athletic, masculinized, with broad shoulders and sturdy legs; in short, young people who call out in the name of physical exercise to create strong, brave women, women who can fight both at the front and at the rear. It is an image reminiscent of the feminist, poet, journalist, javelin thrower, tennis player and skier of the time, Anna Maria Martínez Sagi, one of the women who stood out as a representative of the virtues of sport.

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82 |

82 |

### Unión de Muchachas. Sports Camp

Madrid: Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Sanidad  
/ Valencia: Lit. S. Dura, (a publishing house under  
UGT-CNT control), 1936  
Chromolithography on paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

83 |

### The Day of the Alert. November

Valencia: Ortega (a publishing house under  
UGT-CNT control), 1936  
Chromolithography on paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

84 |

### Our Arms will be Yours. Unión de Muchachas, Alianza de la Dona Jove

Barcelona: Subsecretaría de Propaganda / Imp.  
Sociedad General de Publicaciones (EC), 1937-1938  
Chromolithography on paper

Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica, Salamanca

85 |

### All the Youth for the Winter Campaign: 10-25 November

Barcelona: Juventudes Socialistas Unificadas /  
Lit. Lafón y Miralles (C.O.), 1936-1938  
Chromolithography on paper

Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica, Salamanca

«With the establishment  
of the Second Republic,  
a change took place in  
Spain that was not only  
political, but also artistic.»

Soledad Martínez García



# Maruja Mallo

**a.k.a Ana María  
Gómez González**

**Vivero, Lugo—Madrid  
1902—1995**

Maruja Mallo was a transgressive figure, and an artist committed to the Republic, she worked as a teacher at the Lyceum Feminine Club and the Residence of Young Women, which were both in Madrid, she also took part in the Educational Missions.

In 1932 she exhibited her series of works *Sewers and Bell Towers* in Paris and the Barcelona Autumn Salon in 1933. This depressing and bitter series was related to the 'Black Spain' movement. According to Mallo, these works were a confrontation with a world ruled by decay, they dealt with the need to clear the ground before constructing a new world. With two works from this series (*Footprint* and *Toad and Excrement*) she took part in the Logicophobic Exhibition, which was held in Barcelona in May 1936.

The last painting she finished in Spain, before going into exile, was the large-scale oil painting *The Surprise of Wheat*, which was inspired by the image of a woman seen in a demonstration on 1 May, 1936. The work led to a series full of hope for the future and ending in exile, called *The Religion of Work*, in which significance is given to ears of wheat that sprout from the hands of women, where life itself originates.

She took part in the Educational Missions of Galicia with her partner, the Trotskyist Alberto Fernández Mezquita. When the war broke out, she stayed for a while, observing aghast what was happening. She noted down the facts and people's names, before moving to Portugal, from where, with the help of Gabriela Mistral, she began her journey to exile in Argentina. In 1938 she wrote an article about her last days in Galicia, that was published by the newspaper *La Vanguardia*, and illustrated with reproductions of her drawings from *The Religion of Work*.



## 86 |

**Text and illustration from the article**  
«The True Story of the Situation in Galicia» (1).  
*La Vanguardia*, nº 23221, p. 7

Barcelona, 14 August 1938  
Printed paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

## 87 |

**Text and illustration from the article**  
«The True Story of the Situation in Galicia» (2).  
*La Vanguardia*, nº 23222, p. 4

Barcelona, 16 August 1938  
Printed paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

## 88 |

**Text and illustration from the article**  
«The True Story of the Situation in Galicia» (3).  
*La Vanguardia*, nº 23223, p. 11

Barcelona, 21 August 1938  
Printed paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

## 89 |

**Text from the article** «The True Story of the  
Situation in Galicia» (4). *La Vanguardia*,  
nº 23227, p. 5

Barcelona, 26 August 1938  
Printed paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

## 90 |

**The Press. Facsimile copy from a photograph**  
that appeared in the weekly magazine *Estampa*,  
of November 14, 1931

The original work is an oil painting on canvas,  
dated 1931.

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This lost work belongs to the series *Sewers and Bell Towers* (1928-1932), a series exhibited in both Paris in 1932 and the Barcelona Autumn Salon in 1933. The work, together with *Toad and Excrements*, was part of the Logicophobist Exhibition from Barcelona in May 1936. Two tied hands are shown, which are interpreted as the lack of freedom, and, above them, a horseshoe with the tips down, symbolizing bad luck. The stem of a dried thistle represents a lack of hope. Like the rest of the series' depressing and bitter works, it related to the 'Black Spain' movement. The French Surrealists interpreted it as an image of a «brutal and insulting Spain». Maruja Mallo said that these works were a confrontation with a world ruled by decay and out of time, a kind of initiatory descent into hell that was to precede a phase of renewed construction, the works concerned the sweeping and clearing of the ground, before the building of a new world.

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90 |



# Remedios Varo Uranga

Anglès, Girona—Mexico City

1908—1963

She studied at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in San Fernando, in Madrid, where she became friends with Maruja Mallo, Delhy Tejero and Francis Bartolozzi. In 1930 she married Gerardo Lizarraga, a committed anarchist, with whom she went to Paris. In 1932 she moved to Republican Barcelona, where she devoted herself to advertising illustrations, she was also in contact with the Surrealists, with whom she played their renowned «Exquisite Corpses» artistic game.

In 1936 she took part in the Logicophobist Exhibition that was being held in Barcelona, with three works: *The Liberating Leg of Giant Amoebas*, *Sewing Lessons* and *The Accidentality of the Woman-Violence*. The title of this latter work appears cryptic, however the abstract term (accidentality) hints at a powerful denunciation of the ill-treatment of women. The *Venus de Milo* is for her an icon of fertility, love, sensuality, beauty, femininity, that is, the symbol of women. *The Accidentality of the Woman-Violence* is one of the first works by Remedios, who had not yet attained her own style.

In 1936 she met the Surrealist poet and Trotskyist, Benjamin Péret; with him and Esteban Francés she went to Paris, where she befriended Leonora Carrington and discovered Gurdjieff's Orientalist theories. In 1940, with Paris occupied by the Nazis, Remedios went to the south of France, from where, after passing through Marseilles and Algeria, she left for Mexico, where she arrived in January 1942. In Mexico she consolidated her peculiar style, one that reflects a harmonious world and rejects all that is morbid and violent. She created her own world of ironically metaphorical characters, whose faces bear a resemblance to her own. She died suddenly in 1963, at the age of fifty-five.

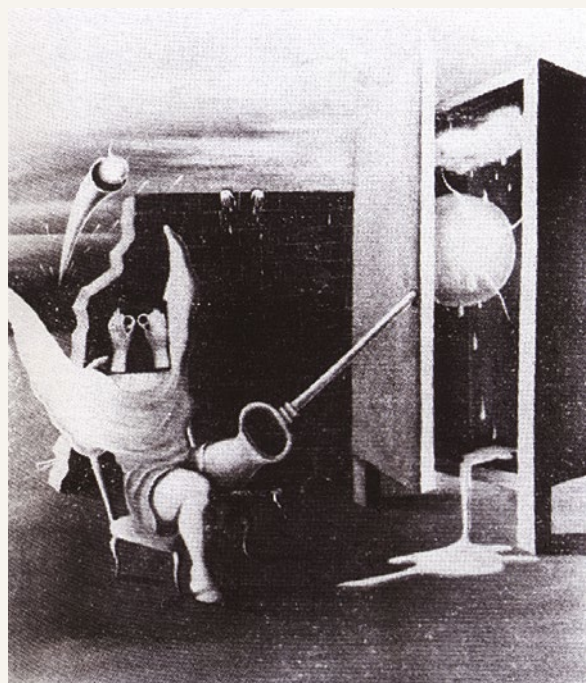
**Circus. Facsimile copy**

The original work is a pen drawing in ink and ink wash on paper, dated 1935.

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This small work, also entitled *Composition*, recalls the exquisite corpse of *Wanting to know the Reasons why*, from the same year, signed by Marcel Jean, Esteban Francès and Remedios Varo herself. The iconography of *Circus* is highly cryptic, as the artist uses elements from a surrealist repertoire: a dry, soft tree that is bare and twisted, heads replaced by butterfly wings, and a cut hand. A languid being is supported on Dalinian crutches and seems to receive the breath of life via a kind of umbilical cord that is lightly held by a hand rising from the ground. During these years the artist fully identified with the Republican values of the left, she became integrated into Surrealism; an artistic movement nurtured by Marxism and psychoanalysis.

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**The Liberating Leg of Giant Amoebas. Facsimile copy**

The original work is an oil painting on canvas, dated to 1935.

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This entire series of unrelated elements possess a large and evocative stock of disturbing associations: the crumbling wall, the prosthesis or crutch in the shape of a key, the headless, winged woman, a large wardrobe that contains a cloud with rain. The title evokes the potential of women as liberators from «amoebas» of all kinds. This is one of the three works that Remedios Varo presented at the Logicophobic Exhibition in Barcelona in 1936, together with *Sewing Lessons* (the location of both works is today unknown) and *The Accidentality of the Woman-Violence*, which is currently on display at the MNAC.

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# Elisa Piqueras Lozano

Albacete – Valencia

1912 – 1974

This painter and sculptor is included in the Valencian generation of the nineteen-thirties, alongside Manuela Ballester and the Renau Berenguer brothers, among others. She met Juan Renau, whom she later married during the struggle and the political activities of university students; both were part of the Valencia University School Federation (FUE).

After the fascist coup she joined the Alliance of Antifascist Intellectuals. In 1937 she took part in the organization of the 2nd International Congress of Intellectuals for the Defence of Culture, in the International Red Cross and in the Association of Antifascist Women (AMA), and took part in the 2nd National Conference of Antifascist Women, which was held in Valencia. She later moved to Barcelona with Juan Renau, where she worked as a drawing teacher at the city's Workers' Institute. Students and classmates remembered her for her talent with pencils and paints.

As an illustrator she worked in the magazines *Verdad*, the publication run by Socialist Communist Unification and directed by Josep Renau and Max Aub, and in *Pasionaria: Revista de las Mujeres Antifascistas de Valencia*, which was directed by her sister-in-law, Manuela Ballester.

In 1939 she made the painful crossing over the border into France with the Ballester family. After being held in the concentration camp Argelers, she left for Colombia with Juan Renau. They settled in Mexico in 1946, returning to Valencia in 1957, where Elisa died after a long illness, at the age of sixty-two.

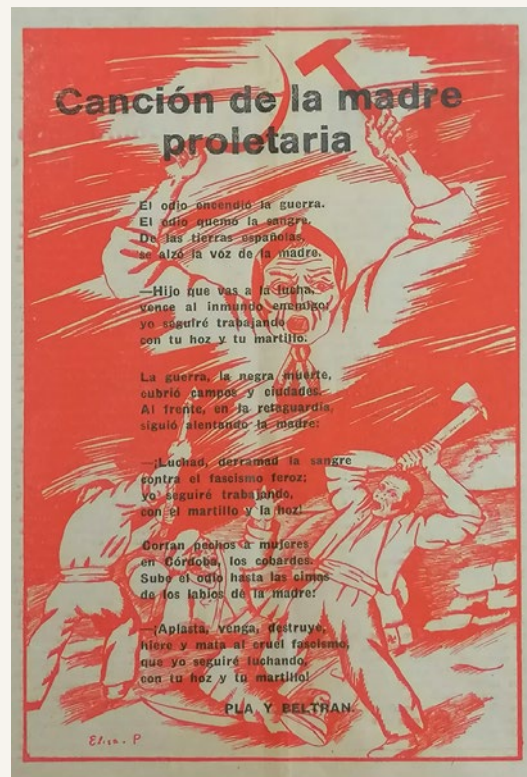


Illustration for the «Song of the Proletarian Mother». From the magazine *Pasionaria: Revista de las Mujeres Antifascistas de Valencia*, nº 2 [p. 2-3]

23 October 1936  
Printed paper

Biblioteca Valenciana Nicolau Primitiu, Valencia

In this illustration from the magazine *Pasionaria: Revista de las Mujeres Antifascistas de Valencia*, which was directed by her sister-in-law, Manuela Ballester Vilaseca, she has represented the meaning of the song in red ink. The composition consists of two levels: at the bottom, two peasants are attacking a soldier, who symbolizes fascism; at the top, the sickle and hammer are raised on high, as the «proletarian mother» vehemently encourages the struggle of the two men, in an allegory of the mother country defending itself against the fascist enemy. During the war years, Piqueras also worked with small illustrations in the newspaper *La Verdad*, where his cartoons ironically caricatured the rebel military forces, the Church, or characters of the time.



# Other little-known Artists

Unfortunately, to date, we still know very little about several artists whose works are exhibited here. We have information about their participation in exhibitions and some of their works: the paintings (Anna Aguilera Gassol and Àngela Nebot Molada) or the illustrations they produced for those magazines committed to Republican cause at the time (Mari Batlle, Montserrat Barta Prats, Alma Tapia Bolívar and Mariona Lluch Soriano).

In all events, they were there and they worked through their artistic creation, in their commitment to the ideals and values of the Republic.

There is still a long way to go and much to be investigated. Our aim is to use this space to acknowledge their work and seek vindication for them, so that they can take their rightful place in the history of art.

1 | **Mariona Lluch Soriano**  
Barcelona, 1927

2 | **Anna Aguilera Gassol**  
Barcelona, 1898-1973

3 | **Alma Tapia Bolívar**  
San Lorenzo de El Escorial, 1906 – Mexico City, 1993

4 | **Montserrat Barta Prats**  
Barcelona, 1906-1988

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94 |

Anna Aguilera Gassol

**An Offering to our Combatants**

C. 1937  
Oil on canvas

MNAC-Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona

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The half-length figure of a young woman, in simplified, rounded shapes, with a garland on her head and a bouquet of flowers in her hands, fills the space. The brushstrokes are long, while the application of paint is thick, and uses bright and vibrant colour ranges, these lively colours contrast sharply with the girl's bewildered, sad expression. On the back of the canvas reads: «An offering / to those who fight / and give their lives / and give their blood / for the light / for humanity / for love and / freedom». The iconography - a floral offering of gratitude to those who fight and die for freedom - adds value to the work, despite its formal simplicity.

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95 |

Mariona Lluch Soriano

**Unpublished drawing for the children's weekly *Tovarix***

June 1936  
Coloured ink drawing, glued to a wooden panel

Mariona Lluch Soriano collection

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*Tovarich*, a Russian word meaning 'comrade', was supposed to be a children's weekly launched by the '*Pioners*' that was never published. When she was just nine years old, Mariona Lluch drew an encounter between two children: one was running and the other was walking calmly and smiling with a book under her arm. The '*Pioners*' were a communist youth movement involving girls and boys from ages eight to sixteen. She was one of the eight thousand or so young people in Barcelona who were members. The wise, serene boy with the blue frog represented one of the goals of the movement: that of working for an educated childhood. Mariona Lluch produced more drawings, such as the poster *Homage to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Division*, which she no longer remembers; all are signed with her name, followed by a five-pointed star that always accompanies her signature. In issue 47 of the magazine *Meridià*, of 3 December 1938, Francesc Masclans, in the article «Children's Drawings», published a reproduction of one of her small drawings, it is very simple but nonetheless incredible for a girl of only five years old.

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## 96 |

Mari Batlle

**Illustration from the article by J. Grau Latorre «The War brings him back brave». From the magazine *Moments: La Revista del Nostre Temps*, nº 4, p. 25**

Barcelona: La Casa dels Secretaris / Elzeviriana, May 1937  
Printed paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

## 97 |

Mari Batlle

**Text by F. Aláiz, «Everyone's Vegetable Plot (Succeeded)», with drawings by Mari Batlle. From the children's magazine *Porvenir*, nº 13**

Barcelona: F.R.E.R., 1938  
Printed paper

Biblioteca de Catalunya, Barcelona

## 98 |

Mari Batlle

**«Juanito and Pilín and the Ingenious Chicken». From the magazine *Pionero Rojo: Semanario de los Niños Obreros y Campesinos*, Year I, nº 7, p. 5**

1937  
Printed paper

Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona (Casa de l'Ardiaca)

## 99 |

Mari Batlle

**Text and illustrations from the article «The Bunch of Roses». From the magazine *Moments: La Revista del Nostre Temps*, nº 11, p. 39. Facsimile copy**

Barcelona: La Casa dels Secretaris / Elzeviriana, 1938  
Printed paper

## 100 |

Alma Tapia Bolívar

**Sign up to the Aragonese Militias**

Valencia: Lit. S. Dura, (a publishing house under UGT-CNT control), 1936  
Chromolithography on paper

Biblioteca del Pavelló de la República, Barcelona

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She uses virtually flat colours to show a militiaman resting, with a headscarf like a *cachirulo* (a traditional item worn by peasants in Aragon), with a rifle hanging over his shoulder and a bay twig in his mouth (a symbol of the expected victory), or perhaps it is that of an olive (a symbol of peace). The powerful anatomy of the militiaman stands out in its diagonal composition. The reddish complexions of the figure suggest his passion and strength.

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## 101 |

Alma Tapia Bolívar

**Cover of the magazine *Música*, nº 5 (supplement)**

Barcelona: Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, May-June 1938  
Printed paper

Biblioteca de Catalunya, Barcelona

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On her way through Barcelona, in 1938, she illustrated the fifth edition of the magazine *Música*, with small, simple drawings, in terms of form and iconography. This monthly magazine was published by the Central Music Council (the Ministry of Public Instruction) in Barcelona between January and June 1938. It took a colossal effort of stamina to keep musical activity alive. The publication also represented a cultural experiment in the midst of the revolutionary spirit of the time.

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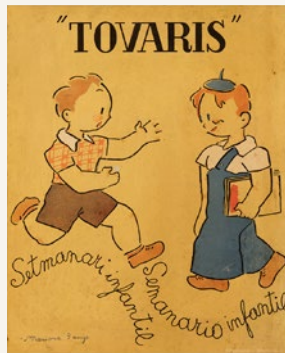
## 102 |

Montserrat Barta Prats

**From the magazine *Porvenir: Almanaque***

Barcelona: Tierra y Libertad, 1939  
Printed paper

Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona  
(Casa de l'Ardiaca)



95 |



100 |